

Filing a Complaint or Other Initiating Document

READ THIS before attempting to file a complaint.

- ✓ Payment for filing fees will be made through Pay.gov, a service used by the District Court to process filing fees. Pay.gov is **NOT** a department of, or managed by the District Court.

Please review the General Order regarding refund of filing fees paid electronically. The full order is available at <http://10.205.15.104/PRESS/GeneralOrder102607.PDF> and applicable excerpt is provided at the end of this document.

- ✓ The filing user will be prompted to enter **credit card** information while filing the notice of appeal. Pay.gov accepts Visa[®], MasterCard[®], Discover[®], American Express[®] and Diners Club International[®].

Debit cards are not accepted for payment at this time. Please check the Clerk's Office website at www.ilnd.uscourts.gov for updates.

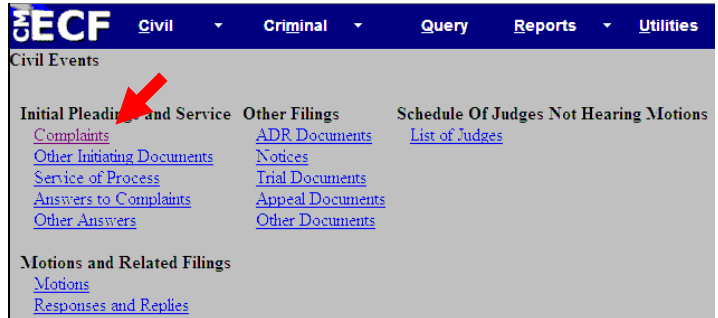
- ✓ New cases are deemed filed on the day the Clerk's Office receives the required filing fee. Any complaint or miscellaneous filing submitted for payment electronically without payment will be docketed as a received document (fee due).
- ✓ Complaints will be filed in a temporary case record bearing the case number 07cv99999 and the case title "Plaintiff v. Defendant". Clerk's Office staff will assign a case number, judge, and magistrate judge to the documents submitted by close of business at 4:30 p.m. Filings submitted after 4:30 p.m. will be assigned the following business day. Documents will maintain the filing date of the date submitted.
- ✓ Sealed documents are to be submitted to the Clerk's Office in paper form in accordance with local rules. No sealed documents are to be e-filed.
- ✓ Carefully follow the instructions provided in this document to ensure a successful filing.

Filing a Complaint or Other Initiating Document

1. Select the appropriate link to begin your filing.

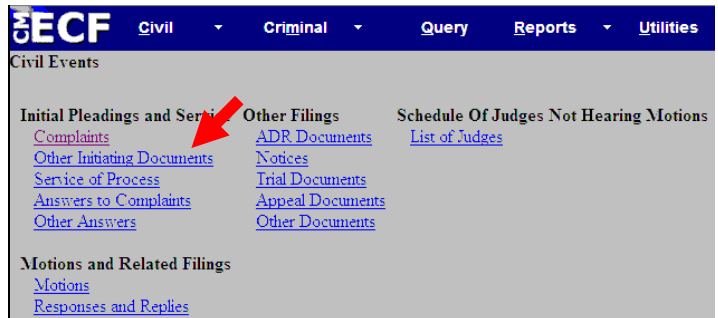
➤ To file a **Complaint** click on the **Complaints** link.

➤ To file a **Writ of Habeas Corpus** click on the **Complaints** link.



➤ To file a **Notice of Removal** click on the **Other Initiating Documents** link.

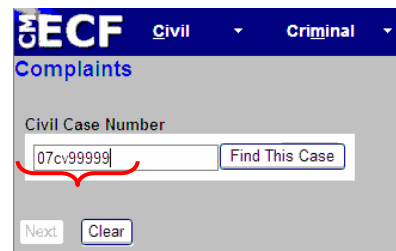
➤ To file a **Miscellaneous Case** click on the **Other Initiating Documents** link.



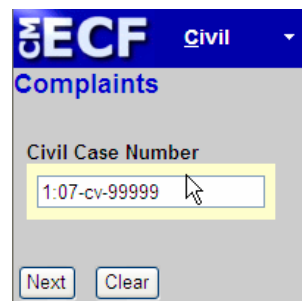
2. A. Enter **07cv99999** as the case number.

B. Click **Find This Case**.

**** ROCKFORD office filers use case number 07cv59999**



3. Once the case number displays in the box click **Next**.

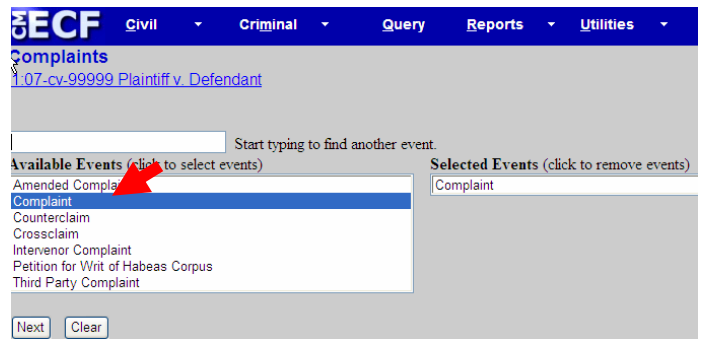


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4. Click **Next**.

The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints interface. At the top, there's a blue header with the ECF logo and tabs for 'Civil' and 'Criminal'. Below the header, the word 'Complaints' is displayed. A case number '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant' is shown. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Next' and 'Clear'. A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'Next' button.

5. Select the appropriate event.

The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints interface with the 'Available Events' dropdown menu open. The menu lists several options: 'Amended Complaint', 'Complaint', 'Counterclaim', 'Crossclaim', 'Intervenor Complaint', 'Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus', and 'Third Party Complaint'. A red arrow points to the 'Complaint' option. To the right of the dropdown, there's a section for 'Selected Events' which currently contains 'Complaint'. At the bottom, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

In this example, we are filing a complaint.

6. A. Select **Plaintiff**.
B. Click **Next**.

**DO NOT ADD
PARTIES ON THIS
SCREEN.**

The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints interface with the 'Select the Party' dropdown menu open. The menu lists two options: 'Defendant [Defendant]' and 'Plaintiff [Plaintiff]'. The 'Plaintiff [Plaintiff]' option is selected. To the right of the dropdown, there's a link that says 'Add New Party' with a red circle and a slash over it, indicating that this action should not be taken. At the bottom, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

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7. A. Uncheck all boxes.
B. Click **Next**.

Do not link the attorney to this case. Doing so will cause to receive all complaints filed in case 07cv99999.

The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen for case 1:07-cv-99999. The page has a blue header with 'ECF' and tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', and 'Reports'. The main heading is 'Complaints' with a link to '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant'. The text states: 'The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case(s). Please check the box on the left of the screen for associations which should be created. If the association should *not* be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*.' Below this, there are three checkboxes: 'Plaintiff (pty:pla) represented by Attorney Test (aty)', 'Lead', and 'Notice'. All three are currently unchecked. Red arrows point to each of these checkboxes. At the bottom are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

8. A. Select the defendant.
B. Click **Next**.

DO NOT ADD PARTIES ON THIS SCREEN.

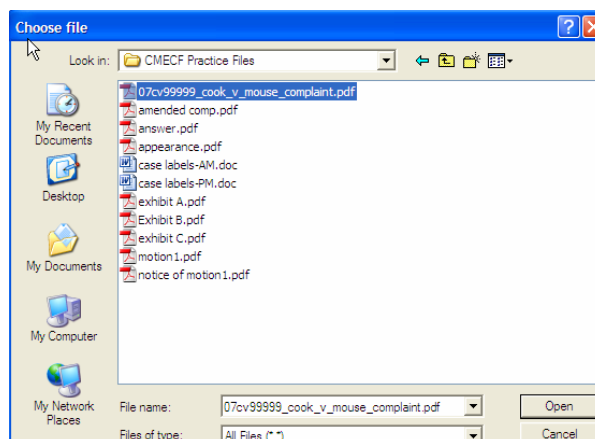
The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen for case 1:07-cv-99999. The page has a blue header with 'ECF' and tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', and 'Re'. The main heading is 'Complaints' with a link to '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant'. The text states: 'Please select the party that this filing is against.' Below this, there are two sections: 'Select the Party:' and 'OR Select a Group:'. Under 'Select the Party:', there is a list box with 'Defendant [Defendant]' and 'Plaintiff [Plaintiff]'. Under 'OR Select a Group:', there are four radio buttons: 'No Group' (selected), 'All Defendants', 'All Plaintiffs', and 'All Parties'. To the right of these is a link 'Add/Create New Party' which is circled in red with a red 'X' over it. At the bottom are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

9. Click **Browse**.

The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen for case 1:07-cv-99999. The page has a blue header with 'ECF' and tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', and 'Reports'. The main heading is 'Complaints' with a link to '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant'. The text states: 'Select the pdf document (for example: CA199cv501-21.pdf). Filename'. Below this is a text input field for the filename and a 'Browse...' button. A red arrow points to the 'Browse...' button. Below the input field is the text 'Attachments to Document:' followed by two radio buttons: 'No' and 'Yes' (selected). At the bottom are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

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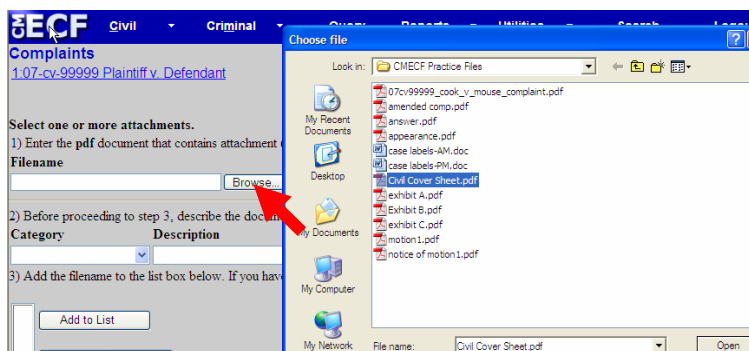
10. A. Click the complaint that you are filing.
- B. Click **Open**.



11. A. Click the **Yes** radio button.
- B. Click **Next**.



12. Attach the Civil Cover sheet that you created.
- A. Click **Browse**.
- B. Locate and click on the Civil Cover sheet for this case.
- C. Click **Open** to link it to the complaint.



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13. A. Click the ▼ arrow and select **Civil Cover Sheet**.
- B. Click **Add to List**.

Select one or more attachments.

1) Enter the pdf document that contains attachment (for example)

Filename
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Fi

2) Before proceeding to step 3, describe the document using the

Category	Description
▼	
Affidavit	
Appendix	
Certificate of Service	
Civil Cover Sheet	
Declaration	
Errata	

ist box below. If you have more attac

14. A. Repeat steps 11 and 12 to add the Appearance Form and Summonses.
- B. Click **Next** once all files have been attached.

Instead of selecting a category, type the name of the document in the description field.

You may attach the required number of PDFs for your summons. Provide one summons for each named defendant. If the government is a defendant, also provide one summons for the U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Attorney's Office, and the officer of agency of the United States (See FRCP 4.)

Select one or more attachments.

1) Enter the pdf document that contains attachment (for example)

Filename
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Fi

2) Before proceeding to step 3, describe the document using the

Category	Description
▼	Appearance

3) Add the filename to the list box below. If you have more attac

Select one or more attachments.

1) Enter the pdf document that contains attachment (for example: C:\appendix.pdf).

Filename
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Files\Civil Cover Sheet.pdf

2) Before proceeding to step 3, describe the document using the Category list, the Descripti

Category	Description
▼	


3) Add the filename to the list box below. If you have more attachments, go back to Step 1.

F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Files\Civil Cover Sheet.pdf	<input data-bbox="1295 1465 1369 1493" type="button" value="Add to List"/>
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Files\Summons.pdf	
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Files\appearance.pdf	

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15. If this complaint includes a **jury Demand**, type **Jury Demand** in the box.

16. Click **Next**.



The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen. At the top, there are tabs for Civil, Criminal, Query, and Reports. Below the tabs, the word 'Complaints' is displayed. A link '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant' is visible. Below this, there is a text input field with the label 'If this complaint includes a jury demand, type Jury Demand in box :'. The field contains the text 'JURY DEMAND'. At the bottom, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

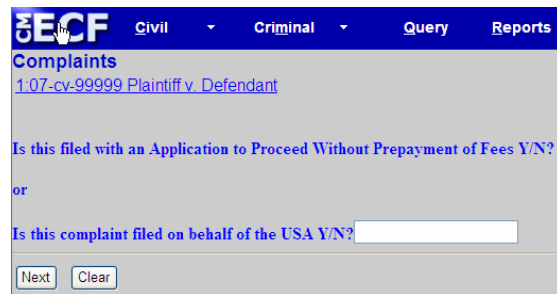
*** The jury demand must also be noted on the Civil Cover Sheet.**

17. Indicate payment type.

Type N if you are paying by credit card.

Type Y only if you are:

- paying the fee in person, instead of credit card, OR
- filing on behalf of a government party (AUSA only), OR
- filing an informa pauperis application.



The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen. At the top, there are tabs for Civil, Criminal, Query, and Reports. Below the tabs, the word 'Complaints' is displayed. A link '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant' is visible. Below this, there are two questions: 'Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees Y/N?' and 'Is this complaint filed on behalf of the USA Y/N?'. Each question has a text input field. At the bottom, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

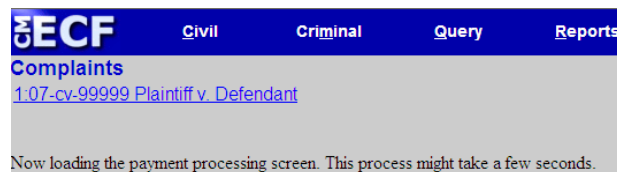
18. Click **Next**.

This screen reflects the filing fee amount that will be charged to your credit card, and is NOT APPLICABLE if you are not paying with a credit card.



The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen. At the top, there are tabs for Civil, Criminal, Query, and Reports. Below the tabs, the word 'Complaints' is displayed. A link '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant' is visible. Below this, the text 'Fee: \$1' is displayed. At the bottom, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

19. Wait for the processing screen to display.



The screenshot shows the ECF Complaints screen. At the top, there are tabs for Civil, Criminal, Query, and Reports. Below the tabs, the word 'Complaints' is displayed. A link '1:07-cv-99999 Plaintiff v. Defendant' is visible. Below this, the text 'Now loading the payment processing screen. This process might take a few seconds.' is displayed.

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20. Follow the prompts and enter your credit card information.

The payment amount displayed reflects the appropriate fee for the type document being filed.

[Return to your origins](#)

Online Payment
Step 1: Enter Payment Information

Pay Via Plastic Card (PC) (ex: American Express, Diners Club, Discover, Mastercard, VISA)

Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

Account Holder Name: *

Payment Amount: \$1.00

Billing Address: *


Billing Address 2:

City:

State / Province:

Zip / Postal Code:

Country: *

Card Type: * 

Card Number: * (Card number value should not contain spaces or dashes)

Security Code: * [Help finding your security code](#)

Expiration Date: * / *

Select the "Continue with Plastic Card Payment" button to continue to the next step in the Plastic Card Pa

21. Check the box authorizing the charge. If this box is not checked the filing fee cannot be processed.

22. To have a receipt emailed to you, enter your email address in both boxes.

Enter email address for receipt.

[Return to your originating application](#)

Online Payment
Step 2: Authorize Payment 1 | 2

Payment Summary [Edit this information](#)

Address Information	Account Information	Payment Information
Account Holder Name: Attorney Test 219 S. Billing Address: Dearborn Billing Address 2: City: State / Province: Zip / Postal Code: 60600 Country: USA	Card Type: Visa Card Number: *****2222 Expiration Date: 4 / 2008	Payment Amount: \$1.00 Transaction Date 10/25/2007 14:22 and Time: EDT

Email Confirmation Receipt
To have a confirmation sent to you upon completion of this transaction, provide an email address and confirmation below.

Email Address:

Confirm Email Address:

CC: Separate multiple email addresses with a comma

Authorization and Disclosure
Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

I authorize a charge to my card account for the above amount in accordance with my card issuer agreement. ☒ *

Press the "Submit Payment" Button only once. Pressing the button more than once could result in multiple transactions.

Check this box to authorize charge

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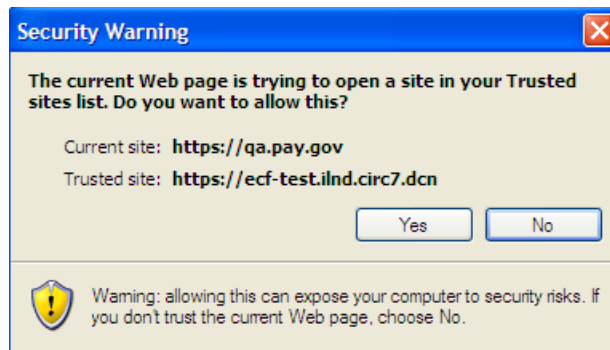
23. Wait until your credit card charge has been processed.

Your request is being processed. Please wait.



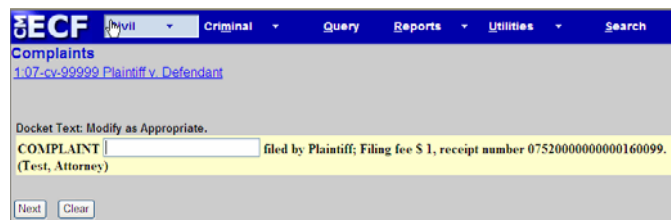
24. Click **Yes** to return to CM/ECF.

If you do not select yes, you will not be returned to the Court's website to complete your transaction. Your credit card will be billed, but your complaint will NOT be filed.



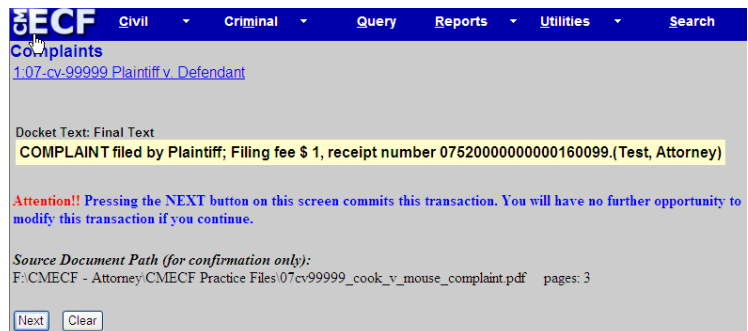
25. Add any desired text to the docket entry.

26. Click **Next**.



27. Verify that the docket text, **and** attachments are correct then click **Next**.

List of attachments included with the filing.



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28. Wait for the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to display.

Make sure that you either print a copy of the NEF for reference or write down the document number. You will need this number in the event that the clerk's office requests that you resubmit any PDF documents.



Shown above is a sample receipt generated by Pay.gov. Remember, in order to generate a receipt you must enter your email address at the prompt on the Pay.gov screen. Refer to step 20 for details.

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
GENERAL ORDER 07 – 0023
GENERAL ORDER ON ELECTRONIC CASE FILING**

Excerpt regarding refund of erroneous or duplicate payments:

(D) The Clerk of Court is hereby granted the authority to authorize refunds upon written request by a party who has inadvertently made erroneous or duplicate payments on line. All approved refunds shall be processed through the electronic credit card system. In the event that a particular attorney or law firm continues to make repeated mistakes when submitting fees and requesting refunds, the Clerk of Court may request that the Court issue an order to show cause why further requests for refunds should be considered. If a credit card transaction is invalid for any reason or if the credit card processing function in CM/ECF is experiencing problems, payment must be made within two business days. Summons will not be issued until the fee is paid by credit card, check, cash, or money order. If the case is an emergency filing, the filer must bring the paper document.